

strategies, Senator REID and I are pleased to put forward this new initiative that fully acknowledges the role that safe water plays in health and development. In the future, we must find the additional resources to fully fund the Safe Water Act of 2005, without decreasing our support for existing safe water and other foreign assistance programs.

Mr. REID. I fully agree that the initiatives set forth in this act should be fully funded, but not with funds taken from existing and ongoing foreign assistance programs. I look forward to working with Senator FRIST and the White House to obtain full funding for this program in the President's fiscal year 2007 budget and in subsequent years so the United States can implement pilot programs that can eventually be expanded to other countries in the future.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business for up to 60 minutes, with the first 30 minutes under the control of the Democratic leader or his designee and the second 30 minutes under the control of the majority leader or his designee.

Who seeks recognition?

The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. SALAZAR and Mr. CORZINE pertaining to the introduction of S. 496 and S. 497 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VITTER). The Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. CORZINE and Mr. DURBIN pertaining to the introduction of S. 495 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

THE PRESIDENT'S TRIP

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, the distinguished Senator from Kentucky has yielded to me his time. I will take about 7 or 8 minutes.

It is so important for Members of this body to reflect on the President's most recent trip to Europe. Without being presumptuous, in my judgment, I think it was one of his best, maybe his finest, and in the years to come, I hope he can parallel the achievements of this particular trip.

My views are important, perhaps, but more important are the views of the representatives from nations in Europe

to the United States. I had several of the ambassadors visit in my office this week to discuss the President's trip.

I would like to read some quotes from television programs on which these three ambassadors appeared recently. Jean-David Levitte is France's Ambassador, and I have had a particularly warm and productive relationship with this ambassador since he was posted. He has had an extraordinary career. He has been here in Washington a number of times in previous positions.

It is well known he is very close to President Chirac. When asked a question about the relationship between our country in the context of the President's trip, he said as follows:

Yes, I do think so. Wolf, I participated—I was privileged to participate in the dinner in Brussels between the two Presidents, and it worked very well.

That is his appraisal.

Then Wolfgang Ischinger, Germany's Ambassador, when asked the question, Has the relationship, based on what you know, Mr. Ambassador, improved? he replied:

Oh, I certainly think so, Wolf. In fact, I don't really think we really needed the meeting in minds, President Bush's visit to Germany this past week, to improve this relationship between the two governments. I think we've been doing quite well over the last year already.

He continued when pressed again:

I think there has also been substantive movement and change, not only because President Bush, by visiting the European Commission, put to rest the suspicions in this country and in Europe that America might no longer be supportive of the European Union, of the idea of European integration, but also because in the meeting with the German side, in which I had the chance of participating, President Bush, I believe, enhanced the degree of U.S. support. He went a step further in terms of expressing his support for European efforts on Iran.

Then Sir David Manning of Great Britain. I have had a warm and productive relationship through the years with this fine individual, another individual who has been posted to this country on a number of occasions. When asked a similar question about the President's trip, he replied:

Well, I think we're all very encouraged by the President's visit and, indeed, by Secretary Rice's visit, because this has been an issue that's been discussed by all our heads of government, and much more widely than the three of us here.

The point I make is, as I read through the press reports from these three ambassadors in the United States, they were all very strong on the issue of the success of the President's visit, together with our distinguished Secretary of State.

Then to another subject that President Bush quite properly raised, it is one of concern to this Senator and I think a number of us here in the Senate. I would like to quote from the President on his trip. He said as follows:

Well, I talked about this issue with President Chirac last night, and Prime Minister Blair.

The issue, if I might step back, is:

Mr. President, European countries are talking about lifting their 15-year arms embargo on China. What would be the consequences of that? And could it be done in a way that would satisfy your concerns?

The President replied:

Well, I talked about this issue with President Chirac last night, and Prime Minister Blair, and I intend to talk about it in a couple of hours at the European Union meeting. We didn't discuss the issue at NATO, by the way. And here's what I explained. I said there is deep concern in our country that a transfer of weapons would be a transfer of technology to China, which would change the balance of relations between China and Taiwan, and that's of concern. And they, to a person, said, well, they think they can develop a protocol that isn't—that shouldn't concern the United States. And I said I'm looking forward to seeing it. . . .

Referring to the protocol.

I discussed this with several ambassadors when they came into my office and, indeed, a team is to be forthcoming from the European nations to visit the United States. I think we should hold final judgment until we have had the opportunity, in a courteous way, to reflect on those precautions that the European countries will take in the context of lifting this ban.

But I point out that in my study of the relationship between China and not only the United States and Taiwan but the entire region, they are on a very fast pace to modernize a wide array of weapons—weapons that could, for the first time, begin to pose in the out-years a threat to our fleet units.

I select the fleet units because our concept of the projection of our force forward is dependent on the protection of naval components, particularly our carriers. I see on the horizon grave concerns about lifting this embargo in terms of China's capability militarily in the outyears.

A third subject I would like to cover in the context of the President's visit is he was addressing the challenge to, indeed, all free nations as we participate to try and give support to Israel and the Palestine Government to come to a final consensus to resolve their problems and to bring about a cessation of the turmoil in that region.

I am so deeply grateful the President made the following statement:

President Bush on his recent trip to Europe stated, "America and Europe have made a moral commitment. We will not stand by as another generation in the Holy Land grows up in an atmosphere of violence and hopelessness."

Yesterday, the Armed Services Committee had a hearing. General Jones, the NATO Commander, was on the stand. I questioned him regarding a concept which General Jones and I have discussed on a number of occasions over the past several years, and that is the possibility of NATO playing a role of peacekeeping on behalf of the Palestinian and Israeli interests. That would have to be at the invitation of both of those Governments.

Why NATO? Our country is very proud of a very long relationship with

the State of Israel, an island of democracy in that part of the world. We have very strong ties there, as we should. Correspondingly, Europe has had very strong ties with the Palestinian people through the years. It goes way back. Significant portions of their population have ties to that region. So a NATO peacekeeping force comprised of both the military units from the European nations and some, I would say, proportionate amount of American forces would be perceived as a balanced force and could come, in my judgment, and provide a sense of security to support such frameworks of peace and accords as these two nations could hopefully achieve with our help and the help of other nations.

Again, it would only be at the invitation of the two Governments, but I think it is a concept that I have addressed on this floor many times. Others have likewise; indeed, some prominent journalists whom I respect. I do hope that it be given consideration.

General Jones in his testimony yesterday said it has been brought up in the North Atlantic Council of recent. Other nations are interested in this concept, and I hope our Nation, the United States, can get behind and explore the options.

I thank the distinguished Senator from Kentucky.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, how much time remains in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 25½ minutes remaining.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 256

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate resumes the bankruptcy legislation, there be 20 minutes of debate equally divided prior to the vote or in relation to the Feingold amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S TRIP TO EUROPE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I, along with others, had an opportunity yesterday to get a briefing from the President about his trip to Europe. It was a bipartisan group, well attended, and everyone was quite interested in getting the President's views of the results of his trip.

It is clear that the Iraqi election has transformed the political landscape, not only in the Middle East but in Europe as well.

First in the Middle East, we have witnessed in the last few months the election in Afghanistan on October 9, the election in the Palestinian territories on January 9. We have witnessed the Rose revolution up in Georgia, the Orange revolution in Ukraine. Then we have had the election in Iraq. And in

the post-Iraq period, we have seen people take to the streets in Lebanon.

It is clear with the unified message from the French and the Americans that the international community wants, at long last, Syrian troops out of Lebanon—entirely out, not just the troops but the security forces as well—so that the Lebanese elections this spring can be uninhibited by foreigners.

All of this is going on, and added to that we have the President of Egypt saying they are going to have a real election. That has certainly not been the case in Egypt in the past. A real election presumably means real choices with the opposition allowed to speak, participate, and run for office.

We have even seen some elections in Saudi Arabia, though women are not yet allowed to vote. That is a step obviously in the right direction.

What is happening here? I think the Iraqi policy of the President of the United States is transforming the Middle East and transforming European attitudes toward America and the policy in the Middle East. The President's trip last week I think underscores that.

He had unanimous support from NATO, all 26 countries, to do something within their capability to help the Iraqi emerging democracy. The French want to help. The Germans want to help. This is an enormous transformation in Europe, as well as in the Middle East. All of this, I would argue, is a result of the extraordinarily effective war on terror and particularly the Afghanistan and Iraqi chapters.

The President's grand strategy is not just to protect us at home—and that has worked so far; since 9/11 they have not been able to hit us again—but through these policies of transformation, he sort of drained the swamp and made it likely that the kinds of people who tend to join up with these terrorist groups will feel a sense of hopelessness in their own countries because they do not have a chance to influence outcomes and determine their own governments and their own fates.

This is an incredible step in the right direction. Clearly, problems remain, and at the top of the list would have to be Iran and North Korea. With regard to Iran, the President is pursuing a multilateral policy in which the British, the Germans, and the French engage the Iranians, hoping to convince them to follow the policy chosen by Muammar Qadhafi, for example, in Libya, witnessing what happened to Saddam Hussein in Iraq, deciding it would be better to give up weapons of mass destruction and work his way back toward being part of the community of civilized nations. The Europeans hopefully will make that point to the Iranians, and we are looking forward to pursuing a very aggressive policy. Everyone in Europe agrees that a nuclear Iran is simply not an option.

While we do have growing areas of agreement with our European allies,

there are some differences. As the Senator from Virginia pointed out, we are not happy about the apparent decision of the European community to trade with China in possibly missile technology or other military equipment that could potentially destabilize Asia and raise the anxiety of the Japanese, for example, and ourselves and exacerbate the cross-straits problem between China and Taiwan. So we do have our differences with the Europeans on that.

The President made it clear that in addition to the public meetings he had with President Putin of Russia, privately he also aggressively emphasized the importance of Russia continuing in a democratic direction and the importance of not unraveling the democratic reforms of the early 1990s if Russia is going to be a place where foreign investment will be willing to go. If there is not a respect for the rule of law and not a free press, not the kind of atmosphere in which one can function, the chances of Russia realizing its aspirations will be significantly set back if President Putin continues down the path he has chosen.

The new Ukrainian President was there. It was very exciting for all of the 26 NATO members to have an opportunity to see this hero. His opponents tried to kill him, and he is still in the process of trying to recover from the poisoning that almost took his life. It was remarkable to see the Ukrainian people take to the streets and demand an honest election, get an honest election, and elect someone who is westward leaning and who wants to bring the Ukraine into the European community and make it a country that can advance the hopes, desires, and aspirations of the Ukrainian people.

Finally, the President indicated he had an extraordinary, uplifting experience in Slovakia. He said he was standing there in the square speaking to the Slovakian people, and he said the best evidence that they have a genuine democracy was that one fellow had a sign up with some kind of anti-Bush comment on the sign. The President said the man stood there quietly holding up his sign during all of the President's speech, and the President pointed out that that was a further illustration that in Slovakia they are free to speak their mind and peacefully protest. The President thought that was a good sign of the stability and effectiveness of the new Slovakian democracy. By the way, that is a country that is making remarkable progress, which is, I am sure, the reason the President chose to go there.

I conclude by saying that President Bush clearly had a good week, and the reason he had a good week is because he has been pursuing policies that are working. Democracy is breaking out, springing up, taking root all through the Middle East, and the Europeans look at that and have to conclude that whether or not they supported the Iraq war initially, that single decision to liberate Iraq could well be the turning